



McGregor W. Scott
United States Attorney
Eastern District of California

Sacramento
501 I. Street, Ste 10-100
Sacramento CA 95814
Tel (916) 554-2700
TTY (916) 554-2855

NEWS RELEASE

Fresno
2500 Tulare St., Suite 4401
Fresno, CA 93721
Tel (559) 497-4000
TTY (559) 497-4500

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 3, 2006

Contact: Patty Pontello, 916-554-2706

www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae

METH CAPITAL DEALERS RECEIVE HEFTY SENTENCES

FRESNO—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that United States District Judge Oliver W. Wanger sentenced EDDY A. GEORGE, 31, MICHAEL C. NOBARI, 28, and EDISON SHINO, 30, all of Turlock, California, to 14 years, 15 years, and 16 years, respectively, for a drug conspiracy involving 1,848,000 pseudoephedrine pills capable of producing 183 pounds of pure methamphetamine. A fourth defendant, RITO S. ZAZUETA, 31, of Livingston, California, will be sentenced for the drug conspiracy following a trial on August 15 for a separate federal offense for returning to the United States after having been deported previously to Mexico. Both ZAZUETA and SHINO, a native of Iraq, are subject to deportation after they serve their prison terms.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Karen A. Escobar, who prosecuted the case, the defendants were convicted after a two-week jury trial for narcotics and firearms offenses. During the trial, the jury heard recordings made during negotiations by the defendants for the purchase of 22 buckets containing 1,848,000 pseudoephedrine pills which filled an Enterprise rental truck. Pseudoephedrine contains ephedrine, which is the primary ingredient used in the manufacture of methamphetamine. After boasting to an undercover drug agent that Turlock was the methamphetamine capital of the world and that Turlock was their “f—ing town,” the defendants agreed to purchase the pseudoephedrine pills for \$220,000. GEORGE, the primary negotiator for the pseudoephedrine, was accompanied by his cousin, NOBARI, who was armed with a loaded firearm. SHINO, another cousin of GEORGE and SHINO, and ZAZUETA, a convicted drug felon, delivered the money for the purchase of the pseudoephedrine. ZAZUETA was also armed with a deadly Beretta, which was loaded and equipped with laser sights.

The case was investigated by the DEA and the Fresno Methamphetamine Task Force, a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Initiative (HIDTA), which is comprised of law enforcement agents from the United States Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Fresno Police Department (FPD), Fresno County Sheriff's Department (FCSO), Madera County Sheriff's Department (MCSO), Merced County Sheriff's Department (MCSO), California Department of Justice Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (BNE), and California Highway Patrol (CHP).

###